



# REOPENING GUIDANCE CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE

The construction industry and a healthy construction workforce are vital to the Harris County economy. Construction companies, construction sites, and construction workers are strongly encouraged to take the following steps to protect the health of their workers and minimize the spread of COVID-19 in Harris County.

Construction workers should not return to work if they are sick. If someone in the construction worker's household is ill with COVID-19 or the worker has been exposed to a person ill with COVID-19, the worker should immediately notify his or her employer.

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- Identify a qualified workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 assessment and control planning; all workers should know how to contact the coordinator with COVID-19 concerns
  - Be flexible with hours; try staggering or assigning team shifts to reduce the number of employees arriving and leaving at the same time
  - Ensure that every worker or contractor who enters a jobsite has signed in and keep a list of and contact information for every worker or contractor who enters the jobsite every day for the purpose of identifying and notifying individuals who have shared a jobsite with someone who has been confirmed to have COVID-19
  - Screen employees before entering the building for symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath, or known close contact with a person who is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19
  - Have employees wash hands or sanitize hands when entering the building or worksite. Provide handwashing stations and hand sanitizer at accessible locations
  - Require all employees to wear face coverings such as a mask, cloth mask, bandana, scarf or shield to protect others
  - Train workers how to properly put on, use/wear, and take off protective clothing and equipment
  - Continue to use personal protective equipment (PPE) for protection for other construction hazards
  - Limit usage and ridesharing of company vehicles. Disinfect large machinery after use by each equipment operator
  - Increase personal space to at least 6 ft when possible including inside of work trailers
  - Remove or rearrange chairs and tables in break rooms and other areas workers may frequent to increase separation
  - Clean and disinfect portable jobsite toilets and frequently touched objects and surfaces such as workstations, keyboards, telephones, handrails and doorknobs. Clean dirty surfaces with soap and water prior to disinfecting. To disinfect, use [EPA-approved cleaning chemicals](#)
  - Avoid using other employees' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If necessary, clean and disinfect them before and after use
  - Prohibit communal water coolers and provide bottled water

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- Keep in-person meetings as short as possible, limit the number of workers in attendance, and use social distancing practices
- Use 70% alcohol-based wipes to clean tools before and after use
- Encourage all workers to report any health or safety concerns
- Provide one (1) working flush toilet for every fifteen (15) workers on site or one (1) outdoor portable toilet for every ten (10) workers on site
- Keep toilets clean, sanitary and operational at all times, and ensure proper disposal of waste from these facilities
- Provide rest breaks of at least fifteen (15) minutes for every four (4) hours worked so workers may follow hygiene guidelines

### Planning for Absenteeism

- If an employee has a temperature above 100°F or is confirmed to have COVID-19, send the worker home immediately. If an employee is confirmed to have COVID-19, employers should notify their local county Public Health officials and inform all workers who are believed to have been in contact with the individual that has COVID-19, in accordance with state and federal law. Employers should take actions consistent with appropriate protocols to prevent the further spread of the disease.
- Determine how you will operate with a reduced staff if employees cannot work due to illness, staying home to care for sick family members and those who must stay home to watch their children
- Prepare to institute flexible workplace and leave policies
- Cross-train employees to perform essential functions, so the workplace can operate even if key employees are absent

### Free COVID-19 Testing is Available for Everyone

We encourage construction industry workers to get free testing at a testing site. The updated online self-assessment tool is confidential and designed to serve the public in the Greater Houston area. To register for testing, visit <http://covidcheck.hctx.net/>. Construction workers who do not have access to the online tool, call **832-927-7575** to get scheduled for testing. Free testing is available regardless of citizenship status and for those who are uninsured.

Please go to [www.hcphtx.org](http://www.hcphtx.org) for any additional information on how to keep yourself or employees safe during this pandemic.

\*People at higher risk for severe illness are those who are 65 or older, especially those with chronic lung disease; moderate to severe asthma; chronic heart disease; severe obesity; diabetes; chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; liver disease; or weakened immune system.

**Additional Information is Available**  
[CDC Business & Employer Resources](#)

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